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Title: Reference regarding passing away of Shri Sarju Prasad Saroj, member 9th Lok Sabha on 27 July, 2007.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I have to inform o`f the sad demise of one of our former colleague, Shri Sarju Prasad Saroj.

Shri Sarju Prasad Saroj was a Member of the Ninth Lok Sabha from 1989 to 1991, representing the Mohanlalganj Parliamentary Constituency of Uttar Pradesh.

Earlier, Shri Sarju Prasad Saroj was a Member of the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly from 1980 to 1989. Shri Saroj also served as the Minister of State in the Government of Uttar Pradesh from 1980 to 1982.

Shri Sarju Prasad Saroj was a Member of the Consultative Committee of the Ministry of External Affairs during the Ninth Lok Sabha. He also served as the Chairman, Railway Recruitment Board, Allahabad in 1996.

A committed social and political worker Shri Sarju Prasad Saroj was earlier a Member of the Zilla Parishad, Pratapgarh. He strove for the welfare of the poor, downtrodden and the deprived sections of the society.

Shri Sarju Prasad Saroj passed away on 27 July, 2007 at Pratapgarh, Uttar Pradesh at the age of 65.

We deeply mourn the loss of our friend and I am sure the House would join me in conveying our condolences to the bereaved family.

The House may now stand in silence for a short while as a mark of respect to the memory of the departed.

11.03 hrs.

The Members then stood in silence for a short while.

श्री प्रभुनाथ सिंह (महाराजगंज, बिहार) : माननीय अध्यक्ष महोदय, हमारी बात को सुन लीजिए। हमने कार्य-स्थगन का प्रस्ताव दिया है। इस देश में जो परिसीमन हुआ है, ...(व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदय : This is not the time. प्रभु नाथ सिंह जी, ऑनरेबल मैम्बर आप जानते हैं कि this is not the time. Please wait for an hour. Let us go through the Question Hour first.

श्री प्रभुनाथ सिंह : अध्यक्ष महोदय, संसद ने परिसीमन आयोग को जो अधिकार दिया था उसका बिलकुल दुरुपयोग हुआ है। सर, सच्चर कमेटी की रिपोर्ट को देख लीजिए। सच्चर कमेटी ने भी लिखा है कि जहां मुस्लिम बहुल क्षेत्र है, उसे ...(व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदय : उस पर बहस का यह टाइम नहीं है। क्वैश्चन 321 प्लीज.

श्री रामजीलाल सुमन (फ़िरोज़ाबाद) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैंने भी क्वैश्चन ऑवर को सस्पेंड करने का नोटिस दिया है। ...(व्यवधान)

MR. SPEAKER: I will accommodate you after the Question Hour is over.

संसदीय कार्य मंत्री तथा सूचना और प्रसारण मंत्री (श्री प्रियरंजन दासमुंशी): अध्यक्ष महोदय, क्वैश्चन ऑवर तो चलना चाहिए।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : क्वैश्चन ऑवर ओवर होने के बाद हम उसे लेंगे।

(Q. No. 321)

SHRI M. RAJA MOHAN REDDY : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am very happy to see the reply given by the hon. Minister. The Government is taking all steps to fill up all vacant posts of judges to clear the huge backlog of pending cases. But still there are a number of cases pending in the Supreme Court and High Courts. For example, there are about 43,580 cases pending in the Supreme Court as on 30th June, 2007 and 36,78,043 cases pending in 21 High Courts at the end of March, 2007.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, you need not mention those details. Please put your question.

SHRI M. RAJA MOHAN REDDY : Sir, in Andhra Pradesh alone, 1,50,037 cases are pending. Even the hon. Prime Minister had expressed his concern in the Conference of Chief Ministers and Chief Justices held in New Delhi on 8th April, 2007 and suggested that courts could consider having more than one shift to clear the backlog of cases. Hence, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Law Commission has examined the question of the strength of judges and other related matters and made

suitable suggestions or recommendations. If so, I would like to know the details.

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not put such a long supplementary.[R1]

SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ: Sir, so far as review of the strength of judges is concerned, it was done recently. I would like to submit that on 1.4.2007, the strength of judges was increased by 65 judges in the court of Allahabad. Thereafter, a second review took place with the CJI and on 1.11.2007 another 153 judges were added to various High Courts.

So far as the State of Andhra Pradesh is concerned, there are 19 vacancies today and five proposals are pending with us.

So far as second shift is concerned, no Government has given its comments so far, except, Gujarat that they have started, on an experimental basis, the second shift in trial courts. This matter is being studied in detail as to how to reduce the pendency of cases in the country.

So far as the strength is concerned, I had already submitted that the review takes place, according to law, every third year and 200 more vacancies have been added to the earlier strength of about 700. Now the strength will be augmented to 900. In the Supreme Court, it remains 26. The trial courts have vacancies and we are requesting the Chief Ministers and Chief Justices to fill up the vacancies as quickly as possible. This is the situation.

SHRI M. RAJA MOHAN REDDY : Sir, a common man's access to justice to pursue his cases has become very costly under the present judicial system. I would like to know whether the Government is proposing to establish regional benches of the Supreme Court and the High Courts and whether some State Governments have requested them in this regard.

SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ: Sir, we are a proud country where there is full access to justice to the citizens and that is why this docket explosion taking place in the country. So far as regional benches is concerned, on various occasions hon. Members have written to me and there have been proposals also. We always approach the Supreme Court for their concurrence, but so far we have not been able to persuade the Supreme Court to agree on this issue.

श्री हंसराज गं. अहीर : अध्यक्ष जी, अभी जो प्रश्न पूछा गया, वही प्रश्न मैं भी पूछना चाह रहा था क्या मध्य भारत में नागपुर में सर्वोच्च न्यायालय की खण्डपीठ स्थापित करने का सरकार विचार कर रही है? हमने बार-बार इसलिए प्रश्न पूछा था कि देश में कन्याकुमारी और कोचीन से तिरुअनन्तपुरम तक के जो लोग हैं, दिल्ली तक आना उनके लिए मुश्किल है, क्योंकि दूरी का बहुत अन्तर होता है, इसलिए देश के मध्य भाग में अगर कहीं सर्वोच्च न्यायालय की खण्डपीठ होती है तो जनता की सुविधा के लिए होगी और जनता को उससे न्याय मिलेगा। क्या सरकार इसके बारे में कुछ कदम उठा रही है, यह मैं जानना चाहता हूं?

MR. SPEAKER: Very good question.

SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ: Sir, I have replied to it, but I would like to inform the hon. House that this problem of people reaching the court is being solved in another way. We are resorting to the video conferencing and e-filing so that a man sitting in Nagpur can file the case from Nagpur and even argue his case from Nagpur. It is being made possible in a very near future. In some courts, it has already been started.

MR. SPEAKER: What about the lawyer's fee? Who will argue on Television? Is there any reduction?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE): It is a fight between two big lawyers.

MR. SPEAKER: No fighting!

SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ: I am nowhere near him.

SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA : Hon. Speaker Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister is there any proposal of constituting special courts for expeditious disposal of cases relating to trial of sensational rape cases and other offences.

MR. SPEAKER: This question is about vacant posts. They are not able to fill up the existing vacancies and you are asking for new courts.

SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA : Sir, so far as Orissa High Court is concerned, more than 2,00,000 cases are pending.

MR. SPEAKER: All rape cases!

SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA : Sir, about ten lakh cases are pending in Subordinate Courts. I would like to know what steps the

hon. Minister is going to take to fill up the vacancies for backward States, like Orissa and other States.

SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ: I would like to inform the hon. House on both counts. So far as the rape cases are concerned, they are Session's trial.[r2] He knows it very well that we have augmented the session's courts by providing fast-track trials. Each State is happy with the strength of the Fast Track Courts. So far as Orissa High Court is concerned, we have almost full strength. We have recently added to their strength by five Judges.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : Recently, there appeared a newspaper item that our hon. Chief Justice of India has remarked that the cases are pending in large numbers because the Judges could not be appointed in time. As we all know that the recommendations will have to come from the Judiciary. The President will have to put his seal only. All these things should come from the Judiciary. Then, where is the delay? Is it delay in sending the recommendations? Or, is it delay in putting the signature? It may kindly be explained as to what exactly is the position.

SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ: I will not attribute delays to any person. The system is such. They are very high appointments. The proposal starts from the High Court; it goes to the State Government. They are given two months to go into it. Then they come to the Central Government. We take some time in verification. Then it goes to the Collegium in the Supreme Court. So, it is filtered at various stages. This process is necessary having regard to the fact that High Court appointments are very important appointments, and it is not good to appoint them in a hurry. Nonetheless, Sir, the vacancy position has been comfortably reduced. We have been appointing, on an average, 120 or 110 Judges in a year, which was 55 Judges in earlier years. So, we are expediting it. I will not attribute any blame whether there are delays in the Courts or delays somewhere else. They are being appointed. The fact that we are giving 200 new Judges to the High Courts show the anxiety to reduce the arrears.

MR. SPEAKER: Without attributing anything to anybody, is not the date of retirement of Judges known beforehand? When the vacancy will be caused is known from the date of his appointment.

Mr. Minister, you need not answer this.

श्री प्रभुनाथ सिंह : अध्यक्ष महोदय, उच्च न्यायालय में जो नियुक्ति भरी जाती हैं, उसमें कुछ तो निचली अदालत से सेशन जज स्तर के लोग होते हैं, उनकी पदोन्नति के माध्यम से भरी जाती हैं और कुछ सीधे तौर पर वकीलों की भी नियुक्ति उच्च न्यायालय में होती हैं। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि जो वहां से अनुशंसा होकर आती है, कितने दिनों तक उसे निलंबित रखने की प्रक्रिया है और कितने दिनों में उनकी नियुक्ति की जाती है? मुझे जो व्यक्तिगत तौर पर जानकारी है, पटना उच्च न्यायालय ने कुछ वकीलों का नाम वर्षों पहले अनुशंसा करके भेजा और अभी वह मंत्रालय स्तर पर लंबित है। वह इसलिए लंबित है कि वे लोग सीबीआई के वकील थे और ईमानदारीपूर्वक काम किये थे। चूंकि वे ईमानदार थे इसलिए उनको जज नहीं बनना चाहिए। मैं आपके माध्यम माननीय मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहता हूं कि आखिर राजनीतिक कारणों से निलंबित रखने का क्या औचित्य है?

MR. SPEAKER: I do not think that the Government has any role now.

श्री प्रभुनाथ सिंह : कितने दिनों तक निलंबित रखा जाएगा? हम जानना चाहते हैं कि उस संविका को कितने दिनों तक निलंबित रखा जाएगा?

SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ: There are two proposals pending from Patna High Court. One relates to an Advocate; another relates to a Judicial Officer. This matter was referred to the Collegium; and the Collegium has recently sent the papers back to us.

Indeed, there was a controversy on one candidate of an Advocate because of his role in sending the Army to the Court. Positively, some inquiry was made, and the Collegium was informed. After the Collegium's views, we are processing that proposal. I am not hiding anything. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI SANSUMA KHUNGGUR BWISWMUTHIARY : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would also like to ask...(*Interruptions*) I have given my notice.â€¦ (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: So, what?

...(*Interruptions*)

*SHRI. M. SHIVANNA : Thank you Hon. Speaker Sir, I would like to know from the Hon. Minister the number of vacancies of Judges reserved for Scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Castes which have not been filled so far in the Supreme Court and particularly in the Karnataka High Court. And what are the steps taken by the Government to fill up these vacancies in the Supreme Court and in the Karnataka High Court as number of cases pending there is very large.

SHRI SANSUMA KHUNGGUR BWISWMUTHIARY : Sir, I would also like to support him....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Please wait. This is no system of supporting a Supplementary.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Bwiswmuthiary, unless I call you, you cannot get up. Please wait for your turn. You just cannot innovate systems.

Mr. Minister, is there any reply to it? He has asked about Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.[r3]

SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ: Sir, this is a matter which has to be discussed in a great detail. Now, after sixty years of Independence, there is heartburning in the minds of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes because they are not in large number in the High Courts or the Supreme Court but we have a satisfaction that we are giving due consideration to this aspect. Earlier in 1980s, Scheduled Caste Judges had been coming to the Supreme Court also not as Scheduled Caste but on merit. Similarly, there is no reservation for Scheduled Castes in the High Courts but they have a good case that they should find more representation and they should have faith that the secular policy of this country will do. Unless that is done, this ...(*Interruptions*)

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* English tanslation of the speech originally delivered in Kannada.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Bwiswmuthiary, this system of getting up whenever you like will not be permitted.

Now, Shri Bwiswmuthiary.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Dr. Jagannath, what has happened to you recently?

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI SANSUMA KHUNGGUR BWISWMUTHIARY : Hon. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Law Minister as to how many Scheduled Tribe Judges have so far been appointed in the Supreme Court as well in the High Courts across the country. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: It does not relate to this Question.

SHRI SANSUMA KHUNGGUR BWISWMUTHIARY : Secondly, I would like to know whether the Government of India has contemplated to set up one permanent Bench of the Guwahati High Court at Kokrajhar for 30 lakh population of Bodoland territory or not.

My next question is ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Sorry, what are you trying to do? You can put only one supplementary. You have already put two supplementaries which do not relate to the main Question. You give a notice to the hon. Minister and he will give reply.

Mr. Minister, are you in a position to reply?

SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ: Sir, I can reply to one question.

MR. SPEAKER: Very well. You give your reply.

SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ: Sir, we have one Scheduled Tribe judge, Justice Sema. I will also inform the hon. Member that we have a special policy for the Scheduled Tribes. We started the search as early in 1985 and we located five very eminent judges from the Scheduled Tribes in the North-East. Justice Shashank was a Naga, and then there was Justice Sema, then Justice S.K. Sema and several others. North-East has given very eminent judges.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, there are very eminent judges from the North-East. They should be certainly considered. There is no doubt about that.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: I have already allowed five supplementaries. No more supplementaries please.

Q. No. 322 – Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat.

(Q. No. 322)

प्रो. रासा सिंह रावत : अध्यक्ष महोदय, सरकार एवं मंत्री महोदय ने जो उत्तर दिया है, उसमें बहुत भ्रमित करने का प्रयास किया गया है। उत्तर में एक तरफ मंत्री जी ने स्वयं स्वीकार किया है कि दसवीं योजना में 41,110 मेगावाट के लक्ष्य के मुकाबले वास्तविक क्षमता वृद्धि 21,180 मेगावाट थी और दूसरी तरफ आंकड़े गिनाते हुए सन् 2002, 2003, पंचवर्षीय योजना का पूरा समय और आंकड़े बिलियन यूनिट के अंदर ले गए हैं, जबकि मेगावाट की बात हो रही थी। मेगावाट में जब आपने 41,110 के मुकाबले...(व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदय : जो उत्तर में लिखा हुआ है, उसे पढ़कर क्या होगा।

â€¦(व्यवधान)

प्रो. रासा सिंह रावत : मैं पढ़ नहीं रहा हूं, बता रहा हूं कि इन्होंने आंकड़ों के अंदर भ्रमित करने का प्रयास किया है। ...(व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदय : आप प्रश्न पर आइए।

â€¦(व्यवधान)

प्रो. रासा सिंह रावत : अध्यक्ष महोदय, वास्तविकता यह है कि दसवीं पंचवर्षीय योजना में जितना लक्ष्य निर्धारित किया गया था, उस लक्ष्य का 50 प्रतिशत ही उत्पादन देश के अंदर हुआ है, जैसा बताया गया है। लेकिन देश के सभी हिस्सों तक और सभी लोगों तक बिजली पहुंचाने का लक्ष्य अभी काफी दूर है। 10 प्रतिशत कमी बताई जाती है, लेकिन जब पीक आवर्स होते हैं, उस समय यह कमी 13 प्रतिशत और कुछ राज्यों में 25 प्रतिशत हो जाती है। अत: मैं आपके माध्यम से सरकार से जानना चाहता हूं कि लक्ष्य को पूरा नहीं करने के पीछे क्या सरकार की नीतियां जिम्मेदार हैं, क्योंकि सीएजी ने अपनी रिपोर्ट के अंदर सरकारी योजनाओं और बिजली मंत्रालय को दसवीं पंचवर्षीय योजना में लक्ष्य प्राप्त नहीं करने के लिए जिम्मेदार ठहराया है? यह मेरे प्रश्न का भाग 'अ' है।...(व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदय : प्रश्न का एक ही भाग होता है। आपको एक और मौका मिलेगा।

â€¦(व्यवधान)

प्रो. रासा सिंह रावत : क्या सरकार ने सीएजी रिपोर्ट की समीक्षा करवाई है और इस संबंध में गलतियों को दुरुस्त करने का प्रयास किया है?...(व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदय : आपका प्रश्न हो गया है। आपको और सप्लीमैंट्री पूछने का मौका नहीं मिलेगा।

â€¦(व्यवधान)

श्री सुशील कुमार शिंदे : अध्यक्ष जी, प्रश्न में और उत्तर में देखा जाए तो जो प्रश्न पूछा गया था, उसके बारे में बताया गया है, कोई मिसलीडिंग नहीं किया गया है।[N4] आपने पावर जेनरेशन के बारे में प्रश्न पूछा था, इसलिए जेनरेशन के बारे में बताया है और कैपेसिटी एडीशन के बारे में भी बताया है।

MR. SPEAKER: Please maintain silence in the House.

श्री सुशील कुमार शिंदे : आपने अभी जो बात कही है वह दसवीं पंचवर्षीय योजना में कैपेसिटी एडीशन के बारे में है। पावर जेनरेशन के बारे में भी हमने बताया है कि किस तरह होता है। जेनरेशन का टारगेट इयरली फिक्स अप होता है और कैपेसिटी एडीशन का टारगेट फाइव ईयर प्लान में फिक्स अप होता है। आपकी सुविधा के लिए हमने इन दोनों बातों को दिया है। यह बात सही है कि दसवीं पंचवर्षीय योजना में कैपेसिटी एडीशन के लिए जो टारगेट बनाया गया था, उसमें स्लिपेज हुई है।

MR. SPEAKER: How many meetings are going on in this House? What is this?

श्री सुशील कुमार शिंदे : उसके बारे में मैंने सदन में यह उत्तर दिया था कि मैंने स्वयं अधिकारियों के साथ बैठकर, बातचीत करके यह देखने का प्रयास किया कि हमसे कहां गलती हुई थी और उसे करेक्ट करने के लिए प्रयास कर रहे हैं। पिछली बार यह गलती हो गयी थी कि टारगेट 42,000 मेगावाट रखा गया था और मिडटर्म रिव्यु में हमने देखा कि एक टारगेट 36,000 मेगावाट रखा गया था। जब कमी हो रही थी तो हमने सोचा कि हम इसकी इयरली और मंथली मॉनीटरिंग नहीं करते हैं, इसलिए हमने पिछले साल से आर्डर्स की भी मॉनिटरिंग शुरू कर दी है। दसवीं पंचवर्षीय योजना के प्रथम वर्ष में 20,000 मेगावाट के आर्डर्स गए थे, उसके बाद जो आर्डर्स हुए व अधिकांश प्रोजेक्ट नहीं आए, उसकी वजह से टारगेट कम एचीव हुआ है। 11वीं पंचवर्षीय योजना में हमने 78,000 मेगावाट का टारगेट तय किया था, तो हमने दसवीं पंचवर्षीय योजना के आखिरी साल में ही आर्डर्स देने के बारे में निर्णय किया और 78,577 मेगावाट का कैपेसिटी एडीशन हमने तय किया जिसमें से आज तक 56,000 मेगावाट के आर्डर्स गए हैं। मुझे सदन को यह बताने में खुशी हो रही है कि अभी तक जो मॉनिटरिंग की गयी है, उसके अनुसार इसी साल में 5,000 मेगावाट बिजली ऑन लाइन है, कमीशन हो गयी है।

प्रो. रासा सिंह रावत : मान्यवर, राष्ट्रीय विद्युत नीति में वर्ष 2012 तक सभी के लिए विद्युत तथा प्रति व्यक्ति विद्युत उपलब्धता 1,000 यूनिट से अधिक करने की संकल्पना है, उसे हासिल करने के लिए सरकार क्या प्रयास कर रही है? हमारे देश में वर्तमान समय में विद्युत संयंत्रों की उपलब्धता अपेक्षाकृत कम है और केवल बीएचईएल ही इन उपकरणों की आपूर्ति कर रही है। उपकरण काफी कम हैं, तो उपकरणों की कमी को दूर करने के लिए और साथ में जो क्षति हो रही है, जो लगभग 25 प्रतिशत है, जिसकी वजह से विद्युत और करों का बोझ सहन करना पड़ रहा है। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि इसे रोकने के लिए सरकार क्या प्रयास कर रही है ताकि वास्तविक लक्ष्य को 11वीं पंचवर्षीय योजना में प्राप्त किया जा सके?

श्री सुशील कुमार शिंदे : महोदय, माननीय सदस्य ने बहुत अच्छा प्रश्न पूछा है। मैं उनसे सहमत हूँ कि दसवीं पंचवर्षीय योजना में यह हुआ था और इसे देखकर ही हमने आर्डर्स देने शुरू किए हैं। यह बात भी सही है कि हमारे देश में एक ही ऐसी कंपनी है जो इस संयंत्र का निर्माण करती है। जब यह बात सामने आई, हमने भी बताया तो प्रधानमंत्री जी ने माननीय वित्तमंत्री जी के नेतृत्व में एक ग्रुप ऑफ मिनिस्टर्स एप्वाइंट किया था। उस की मीटिंग में यह चर्चा हो रही है कि हमारे देश में जितने ज्यादा वेंडर्स मिल सकें, उनको लाने का प्रयास हो। मैं इस सभा को जानकारी देना चाहूंगा कि एक अन्य कंपनी लार्सन एंड टूब्रो ने मित्सीबुशान से भी एग्रीमेंट किया है। अन्य कई कंपनियां आ रही हैं और हम चाहते हैं कि देश में कंप्टीशन हो जाए। हमारे वर्ष 2003 के एक्ट का जो मुख्य उद्देश्य है, वह सस्ती बिजली, अच्छी बिजली देना है और कंपीटीटिव बिडिंग में आपने देखा होगा कि हमारे अल्ट्रा मेगा पावर प्रोजेक्ट में एक यूनिट एक रूपए 19 पैसे की कीमत बिडिंग से तय हुई है। यही हमारी सरकार का मुख्य उद्देश्य है कि भारत में सबको, खासकर गरीबों को सस्ती और अच्छी बिजली मिले। इस तरह से हमारा जो 2012 तक प्रति व्यक्ति एक हजार यूनिट देने का प्रयास है, वह पूरा करें।

SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY (BELLARY): As per the reply given by the Minister, the achievements are almost 99 per cent, which is shown in the table. But still the country is facing a shortage of power supply and also low voltage.

People, especially the farmers, are facing great difficulties due to power cuts and low voltage. The farmers have to suffer huge losses of crops due to power shortage. The Union Government, in consultation with the State Governments, should take immediate steps to overcome the shortage of power. For this purpose, the Union Government should upgrade the existing power plants into Mega and Ultra Mega Power plants.

Keeping in view of the above, I would like to know from the Minister (a) whether the Union Government have received any proposal from any State for upgradation of power plants into Mega Power Plants and Mega Power Plants into Ultra Mega Power Plants; (b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise, especially in respect of Karnataka; and (c) the amount allocated and released to the States, particularly to Karnataka.

MR. SPEAKER: What is all this? You should learn what the purpose of supplementary question is. You are asking for the entire electricity generation.

SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY : I am asking for the entire country as a whole.

MR. SPEAKER: No, this is not right.

The Minister may be knowing answers to all but I would not permit.

SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE: I would like to mention in the House that at the all-India level, the shortage of power, the energy shortage is 7.9 per cent and the peaking shortage is 12.9 per cent. It is a fact that the country is facing power shortage, and today we require to have about 20,000 MW power to overcome the prevailing shortage, and that is the reason we have targeted in the Eleventh Plan 78,577 MW. That has been targeted. I have not calculated this for the Ultra Mega Power Project. One unit of Ultra Mega Power is coming to 4,000 MW. Three such Ultra Mega Power Projects have already been awarded, and one is on the line. So, these all will come in the Twelfth Plan but we are trying. At least we have been told that one unit out of the two projects are being tried to get in the Eleventh Plan.

But I would like to assure you that there is reason today for shortage of power for the agriculturists. I have been requesting the States to separate feeder for agricultural purposes so that at a particular time these agriculturists will be given sufficient electricity and according to their desire. Once the feeder is separated, better consideration can be given at that juncture.

About the grant of mega status to the projects, the notification to the existing Mega power policy is under consideration of the Government. Those projects which we have started, those projects which are about to start and asking for mega projects benefits and are coming over here, we are examining them.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, we can club Q. 328. There is a request for this. I think that is good.

(Q. No. 328)[m5]

SHRI KIREN RIJIJU : The hon. Minister has stated about the target set by the Central Electricity Authority. मंत्री जी ने इस सदन में आश्वासन दिया था कि हाइड्रो पावर को भी उतना ही महत्व दिया जाएगा, जितना थर्मल पावर को दिया जा रहा है। लेकिन आपने जो दो साल पहले कहा था, वह नीतिगत बात आपके द्वारा दिए गए इस डाक्युमेंट में रिफलेक्ट नहीं हो रही है। आपका 2012 तक सबको बिजली देने का जो लक्ष्य है, 16,553 MW in hydro and 58,644 MW in thermal अभी आपने अल्ट्रा मेगावाट के बारे में कहा है। जब हमारे देश में हाइड्रो पावर की उपलब्धता है, हमारी नदियां का पानी बे - आफ - बंगाल में यूं ही बह रहा है, तो आप कब तक हाइड्रो पावर को थर्मल पावर के साथ बराबरी तक लाने का आश्वासन देंगे?

MR. SPEAKER: He has elaborately answered earlier.

श्री किरेन रिजीजू : हाइड्रो पावर के बारे में नहीं कहा है।

श्री सुशील कुमार शिंदे: अध्यक्ष जी, हाइड्रो पावर की केपेसिटी इस देश में 1 लाख 50 हजार मेगावाट है और अभी तक हम ने 34,600 मेगावाट ही हासिल की है। लेकिन गए 60 सालों में जो कमी आई है, उसका कारण देखा जाए तो जैसे नार्थ-ईस्ट है, वहां इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर की कमी है और कई बार हमें इंसर्जेंसी का भी सामना करना पड़ता है। यह सब देखते हुए, लोग वहां जाने के लिए तैयार नहीं होते हैं। इसलिए कुछ ज्यादा इंसेंटिव देकर, अट्रेक्शन देकर, हम इसे करना चाहते हैं। अरुणाचल प्रदेश में, जैसे माननीय सदस्य को पता है कि बाहर की पार्टी नहीं आती है, एनटीपीसी और एनएचपीसी वही यूनिट लगाना चाहते हैं और कम से कम 5000 मैगावाट की एनटीपीसी और एनएचपीसी अरुणाचल प्रदेश में बिजली लगाने का प्रयास कर रहे हैं। उसके लिए हम सबका सहयोग चाहते हैं, क्योंकि वहां एनवायरनमेंट सहित कई और इश्यू है। वहां के लोगों को सुविधा देने के लिए, हमने तय किया है कि वहां के लोगों को पीएपीज की सुविधा मिले। इसलिए जैनरेशन पर, लोकल एरिया इपूवमेंट के लिए, हम एक पैसा ज्यादा भी दे रहे हैं, also 12 per cent free power we are giving to give them.

MR. SPEAKER: Do you have any more questions?

श्री किरिन रिजीजू : क्लैरिफिकेशन सर। आपने कहा कि एनटीपीसी ने विदड्रा कर लिया है, 4000 मैगावाट के लिए जो पैसा उन्होंने दिबांग प्रोजैक्ट में लगाया था, वह भी विदड्रा कर लिया है। उसमें मैं यह कहना चाहूंगा कि एनटीपीसी और एनएचपीसी जो आपका पीएसयू है, दोनों का और एक्टिव पार्टिसिपेशन हो, इसके लिए आप क्या कदम उठा रहे हैं?

श्री सुशील कुमार शिंदे : महोदय, एनटीपीसी ने प्रस्ताव पीछे इसलिए ले लिया है क्योंकि वहां डीपीआर तैयार नहीं है, बाकी का डीपीआर तैयार है। अध्यक्ष महोदय, आपको पता होगा कि कई डीपीआर हमारे सेंट्रल इलैक्ट्रिसिटी अथॉरिटी ने तैयार किये थे और वहां प्राइवेट लोग आने के लिए तैयार थे। इसलिए अरुणाचल सरकार ने एमओयू के माध्यम से वह योजना प्राइवेट लोगों को देने के लिए तय किया था। देश को आज बिजली चाहिए, इसलिए हम लिबरल रहेंगे और इस सदन में हमने एनाउंस कर दिया था कि डीपीआर पर जो खर्चा होगा, वह खर्चा और उस पर इंट्रेस्ट लगाकर उनको दिया जाएगा, ऐसा मैंने यहां बोला था। आज मैं इस सदन में बताना चाहूंगा कि एक जो डैवलेपर है उसका डीपीआर उन्होंने ले लिया है और बाकी के डीपीआर लेने का काम बाकी है। एनटीपीसी के बारे में मैं कहूंगा कि उन्होंने जो योजना ली है उसका डीपीआर तैयार नहीं है और जब तक डीपीआर तैयार नहीं रहता है, उसका फुल असेसमेंट नहीं होता है कि कितना खर्चा होगा, कितनी पूंजी लगानी पड़ेगी, इस सबके लिए वह काम रुका हुआ है।

MR. SPEAKER: In the next Session, we shall have a full discussion.

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY : Sir, I appreciate the hon. Minister that he is making great strides for enhancing the generation of power in our country. In spite of phenomenal growth in our economy, we are still lagging behind in generating power as is desired. May I ask hon. Member whether any difference of opinion exists between the Ministry of Power and the Planning Commission in fixing target of power generation and whether Planning Commission is eager to lower the target of power generation or not?

अध्यक्ष महोदय : क्या झगड़ा कराना चाहते हो?

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: Sir, I must bring it to the notice of the House that there is no such type of difference of opinion between the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Power. Our relations are so cordial and we have been discussing many issues with the Deputy-Chairman, and Chairman of the Planning Commission is the Prime Minister of the country. So, we have very cordial relations in establishing our many projects and getting clearances. There is no dispute at all.

MR. SPEAKER: Cordiality helps in getting more funds.

SHRI KHAGEN DAS : Sir, the North-East has been depicted as the country's future powerhouse. May I know from the hon. Minister the names of the projects for which the targets have been set in the North-East region for the Tenth Five Year Plan, with actual achievement of targets? How many projects have slipped to Eleventh Five Year Plan?

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: Sir, this requires notice because I will have to get information. I will submit that, I will inform the hon. Member about this. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Whatever you want, you write to him and he will send the information.[s6]

SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL : Thank you, Sir. The essential natural resources for power production are water, coal and natural gases, which are very much available in the State of Assam. But there is an acute shortage and power problem in the State of Assam in spite of having all these resources. What proposal has been taken up by the hon. Minister to improve the power situation in the State of Assam?

Secondly, there is a hue and cry in the area of consumption or among the consumer industries of Assam regarding the defective digital meter system. I want to ask this through you from the hon. Minister. Have you received any complaint from the State of Assam regarding the defective digital meter system?

SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE : Sir, I have not received any complaint from the State of Assam. However, it refers to the work to be done by the State Government, and they have to look into it. But the hon. Member must be knowing that 750 MW is being done by NTPC at the Bongaigaon Power Station.

SHRI DEEPENDER SINGH HOODA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister in his reply has noted that the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) has worked out the *per capita* consumption of electricity as 631.41 KWh for the year 2005-2006, and we are visioning about 1,000 units by 2012. Is the Minister also aware that in some States the *per capita* demand is much higher than in some of the other States? This is higher in some States like Haryana and Punjab because a lot of power is being used for irrigation purposes so that we are able to fulfil the food grains pool of our country. Is the Ministry considering any subsidized and additional power demand fulfilment for the States, which are using more power in the agricultural sector? For example, Haryana is using more than 50 per cent of its power for the agricultural sector.

SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE : Sir, it is a fact that Haryana and Punjab are the two States that are using more power for the agriculturists. Recently, I have been discussing with the Chief Ministers of both the States to increase capacity addition, and they have responded to it too. I am quite sure that whatever the hon. Member has been expecting will be fulfilled soon in this Plan itself.

MR. SPEAKER: I rightly find that in the media â€¦

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: This habit is very strange. I rightly find in the media that the performance of the young Members of Parliament is being specially noticed. Therefore, I should give them more opportunities. I welcome this.

SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL : Thank you very much, Sir. There are very high incidents of transmission and distribution losses as well as theft of power in our country in the power sector. I would like to ask this through you to the hon. Minister. What steps is the Government taking to reduce the transmission and distribution losses as well as theft of power?

SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE : Sir, the country's losses were more than 40 per cent, but now from the Tenth Plan we have been working very hard and it has been reduced to 38 per cent as the national average. We have taken steps at many places to reduce the transmission losses as well as ATC losses.

As regards transmission lines, we have switched over from 120 KV lines to 220 KV lines; from 220 KV lines to 400 KV lines; and now we are going to switch over to 700 KV lines. India has got very excellent power grid, and it has been certified even by the Western countries. In the next Five-Year Plan, we are likely to switch over to 1,200 KV lines. Thereby, the losses will come down as soon as we increase the transmission to a higher capacity. We are also reducing the T&D losses.

As regards theft of power, we are trying to reduce the losses. The hon. Speaker and this august House is aware that we have passed a law in the Parliament. It has come into existence, and we can expect to reduce our losses through stringent measures.

MR. SPEAKER: I am treating Shri K. Yerrannaidu as a young Member because of his perpetual youth.

SHRI B. MAHTAB : Sir, he is not on his seat.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU : Mr. Speaker, Sir, we are facing shortage of power. In Andhra Pradesh, after the firm allocation by GAIL the promoters have already completed three power projects but have not started production because of lack of gas. The Government of Andhra Pradesh is paying fixed charges of hundreds of crores, which is a great loss to the people of Andhra Pradesh and the consumers. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Yerrannaidu, you are putting the Question like an old Member. Please ask your Question quickly.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU : Why has gas not been supplied even after having given firm allocation for it? When will these projects come into operation? This is my Question to the hon. Minister.

SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE : Sir, there are some three or four projects in Andhra Pradesh that are idle, and in between -- when there was a shortage -- we tried to request the Chief Minister and tried to run it on Naphtha, but it was very costly.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, this has been explained much in detail earlier also.

SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE : Now, adequate gas is not available in the country, and new finds of gas will be available by 2008 and the position will become comfortable. I am quite confident that in the next year the gas will be available, and these three or

four units will be started.

MR. SPEAKER: He has just left his youth, Shri N. N. Krishnadas.

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS : Thank you, Sir. As we talk about generation of electricity, we talk about new establishments for generating power. What about the established power generation units in our country like the Kayamkulam Thermal Power Station? I would like to know this through you from the hon. Minister. What is the reason for not yet starting power generation in its established capacity? When will it be started?

MR. SPEAKER: His query is about some particular power station.

SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE : Is the Kayamkulam Power Station nuclear or thermal?

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS : It is thermal.

SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE : I will have to collect information regarding this, and I will inform the hon. Member accordingly.

MR. SPEAKER: Q. No. 323, Shri Punnu Lal Mohale -- not present.

Q. No. 324, Shri K. Virupakshappa -- not present

Shri P. C. Gaddigoudar

(Q. No. 324)

SHRI P.C. GADDIGOUDAR : Sir, the Minister has stated in the reply that there are 64 branches of the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) presently working in the country, and 10 more branches are to be opened shortly. I am also happy to know that one is to be opened in Hubli too.

I would like to insist on the hon. Minister that the Government should open many more branches to develop the small industries. This will be helpful to the youth also.

Secondly, I would like to ask this. â€¦ (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: The second Question can be asked later on. Mr. Minister, will you open many more branches?

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : Sir, this is a suggestion. I will keep it in mind.

SHRI P.C. GADDIGOUDAR : I would like to know this through you from the hon. Minister. What are the norms and conditions for opening up the banks?

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : Sir, SIDBI is not a regular commercial bank as a Public Sector Bank. SIDBI is a specialized bank in order to lend to small industries through both direct finance and refinance. SIDBI works through other banks also. SIDBI uses the platform of other Public Sector Banks also. Therefore, SIDBI opens branches depending upon the need to have a branch in that area or that State in order to cater to the small and medium industries in that area. But when small and medium industries develop in that area and it requires a specialized SIDBI branch, SIDBI will open a branch in that area.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri J. M. Aaron Rashid -- not present.[r7]

MD. SALIM : Sir, as you know, when we look at the industrial scenario in this country, we find that there is regional imbalance. The Government is particularly putting emphasis on small and micro enterprises because that is where the employment potential is. If you see the footprints of SIDBI, you will find regional imbalance not only in terms of the number of branches and its presence, but also its activities and the number of schemes sponsored. Now, the question to the Finance Minister, through you, is whether he will undertake an exercise to remove regional imbalance in terms of patronage of SIDBI of small and micro enterprises. Will the Minister issue instructions to SIDBI in terms of striking a balance in regard to its presence and activities region-wise?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Members may not ask me to reply. You shall ask the Minister, through me, to reply to it.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, I do not find any glaring imbalance in the footprints of SIDBI – Maharashtra has eight branches, Gujarat has six, Tamil Nadu has five, Uttar Pradesh has 6, and all other States are represented.

MD. SALIM : West and East, South and North.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: This is a function of industrial development, industrial growth, investment, and promotion of small and medium industries. States which are proactive and promote small and medium industries will naturally attract more small and medium industries and, therefore, SIDBI will lend more.

Secondly, Sir, SIDBI does not do direct lending alone. SIDBI's portfolio is not direct lending. Direct finance is only a small part of SIDBI's portfolio. SIDBI really provides refinance support, and refinance is done to primarily lending institutions which are essentially the State-level financial institutions. There is a State Finance Corporation in most States, but many of these State Finance Corporations today have a negative net worth. Unless the State Finance Corporations have a positive net worth and lend to small and medium industries, how does that SFC expect that SIDBI would refinance them? The problem is deeper than merely looking at the number of branches. I think what is important is that States must actively promote industrialization, actively woo investment in small and medium industries, resurrect or restore the vitality of their State Finance Corporations, and you will not find SIDBI wanting in both direct finance and refinance.

श्री शैलेन्द्र कुमार : माननीय अध्यक्ष जी, जैसा कि माननीय मंत्री जी ने कहा है कि उत्तर प्रदेश में छः शाखाएं खोली गई हैं जबकि भारत का हृदय प्रदेश उत्तर प्रदेश की आबादी 18 करोड़ के करीब है। मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या छोटे और लघु उद्योगों को बढ़ावा देने के लिए तहसील और ब्लॉक स्तर पर शाखाएं खोलने के लिए प्रयास करेंगे?

MR. SPEAKER: He has replied to that question.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: I have said that SIDBI is not like a public sector bank which does extensive direct finance. SIDBI is really a refinancing institution. It refinances primary lending institutions. It has nothing to do with the population. It depends upon the amount of industrialization that is taking place, especially in the small and medium sector. If industrialization picks up, more units come up and when SIDBI finds a need, surely it will open branches even at *tehsil* levels.

(Q. No. 325)[r8]

SHRIMATI JHANSI LAKSHMI BOTCHA : I thank the hon. Finance Minister for providing concessional loans for organic farming. Coming to my first supplementary, organic farming is very eco-friendly and export-oriented. Will the Finance Minister consider issuing guidelines to all banks to provide exclusively 30 per cent of agricultural credit to farmers engaged in organic farming? May I know from the hon. Finance Minister whether he would extend loans at concessional rates for organic farming to Self-Help Groups? As the House knows, the Self-Help Groups are very active all over the country, especially in Andhra Pradesh.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: We do not make any distinction between lending to farmers who use chemical fertilizers and lending to farmers who undertake organic farming. That is the thrust of the answer. All concessions available to the farming sector are available to farmers who undertake organic farming.

Now, as far as Self-Help Groups are concerned, they are free to use chemical fertilizers or undertake organic farming. There is no distinction at all. [r9]

However, organic farming has to be promoted. I understand that the National Horticulture Mission has a component intended to promote organic farming. I understand, Sir, a question was asked and the Minister of Agriculture answered elaborately on organic farming. But if she wants to know more about organic farming, I think the question should be put to the Minister of Agriculture. As far as the banks are concerned, we make no distinction. All concessions available to all farmers are available to farmers who undertake organic farming.

SHRIMATI JHANSI LAKSHMI BOTCHA : Sir, will the Government consider a National Project on Organic Farming extending soft loans to entrepreneurs who are in the business of making biodynamic compost, liquid manure and other organic preparations? Sir, I understand the Ministry has not issued instructions to State Governments regarding organic farming loans. I would like to know, through you, Sir, whether the Minister will ask the State Governments to submit a plan of action within a certain time limit.

MR. SPEAKER: You can better do that.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, as I said, banks do not make any distinction between chemical fertilizers and organic farming. But

since the hon. Member has asked this question, I have collected the information from the other Ministries. There is a Centrally-sponsored Scheme on National Horticulture Mission which promotes organic farming. The Ministry of Commerce launched the National Programme for Organic Production in April, 2000. The objectives of that Programme, I can read them out. APEDA provides financial assistance to those who are engaged in organic farming. There is national standard for organic production and certification measures being implemented by APEDA. I think, different Ministries who are directly connected with farming and export of agricultural products are promoting organic farming.

SHRI PRABODH PANDA : Sir, with regard to the loans given to the farmers at a concessional rate of interest, though it is reduced from nine per cent to seven per cent, it is confined only to the short-term loans and has not been extended to long-term loans. I would like to know whether the Minister is thinking of applying his mind on this issue, as per the recommendations made by Dr. Swaminathan Commission, that is, reducing the concessional rate to four per cent.

MR. SPEAKER: You are going from where to where, I do not know. This is a question on organic farming.

SHRI PRABODH PANDA : Sir, it is about giving loans at concessional rates to the farmers.

MR. SPEAKER: That does not mean that it can be any question relating to farmers. Mr. Minister, do you wish to answer this? I will not compel you.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, the seven per cent interest for crop loans was introduced by this Government two years ago and, of course, the State Governments have supplemented it by offering a further subsidy of one or two per cent; in one case, even as much as three per cent.

As far as investment credit is concerned, which is what we call long-term credit, there is the second Vaidyanathan Committee Report. We are examining that Report. We have held one consultation with all the State Finance Ministers and Chief Ministers. Some consensus has emerged. I have sent the consensus of that meeting to the State Finance Ministers and Chief Ministers. Once I get the response, we will certainly take into account what the hon. Member has said.

श्री मोहन रावले : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से वित्त मंत्री जी से पूछना चाहता हूं कि क्या वह ऑर्गेनिक फॉर्मिंग के लोन की दर सात परसैन्ट से घटाकर चार परसैन्ट करेंगे?

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Whatever rate of interest will apply to farming will apply to organic farming. [r10]

चौधरी लाल सिंह : अध्यक्ष महोदय, किसानों ने फार्मिंग के लिये कर्ज लिये। इसी तरह जम्मू कश्मीर में किसानों ने कर्जे लिये लेकिन स्टेट में टरमॉयल और टैररिज्म की वजह से वे अपने आपको खड़े नहीं कर पाये। जब पूर्व प्रधानमंत्री श्री देवेगौड़ा आये थे तो उन्होंने अनाउंस किया था कि किसानों के कर्जे माफ किये जाते हैं। सरकारें बदलती गई और यह सब चलता रहा लेकिन किसानों के कर्जे आज तक माफ नहीं हो पाये हैं। किसान ने फर्टिलाइज़र के लिये जो कर्ज दो हजार रुपये का लिया था, वह अब 20 हजार रुपये तक पहुंच गया है।

अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से सरकार से जानना चाहता हूं कि ऑनरेबल पूर्व प्रधानमंत्री ने जो कमिटमेंट किया था लेकिन टरमॉयल और टैररिज्म की वजह से किसानों का नुकसान हुआ, क्या सरकार उन कर्जों को वेव-ऑफ करने की व्यवस्था करेगी?

अध्यक्ष महोदय : ऑनरेबल मिनिस्टर क्या कहेंगे?

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, we require notice for this question.

MR. SPEAKER: Certainly.

You put a specific question, important but specific.

चौधरी लाल सिंह : ... *

MR. SPEAKER: That comment will be omitted. Shri Lal Singh, please do not do this.

श्री राम कृपाल यादव : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूं कि NABARD को ब्याज देने के लिये जो आर्थिक सहायता दी जाती है, उसका आधार क्या है? सरकार NABARD को आर्थिक सहायता दिये जाने की व्यवस्था करती है। मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि सरकार ने जैव कृषि के लिये किसानों का उत्थान करने के लिये क्या व्यवस्था की है?

अध्यक्ष महोदय : राम कृपाल जी, यह क्वैश्चन इसमें नहीं आता है। पता नहीं आप लोग क्या करते हैं, प्रश्न कुछ होता है, आप पूछते कुछ और हैं।

श्री राम कृपाल यादव : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मेरा प्रश्न यह है कि किसानों को जो सब्सिडी दे रहे हैं, उनके ब्याज दर में कटौती करेंगे या नहीं?

MR. SPEAKER: The other hon. Member has asked that question and yet you are asking the same question.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Let me repeat most respectfully, Sir, this Government reduced the interest rate from 10 per cent to seven per cent. Any suggestion for further reduction will be considered very sympathetically.

SHRI MANJUNATH KUNNUR : Sir, organic farming is the best method to follow for this country. To encourage organic farming, banks are not coming forward to sanction loans as and when they are required.

MR. SPEAKER: Put this question to Agriculture Minister.

SHRI MANJUNATH KUNNUR : I would request the hon. Minister to give specific directions, especially in the case of organic farming, that loans should be distributed as and when required. Also, the amount fixed now is Rs.3 lakh now which may please be increased to at least Rs.10 lakh, and with a longer term.

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* Not recorded

MR. SPEAKER: Today is the last day of this Session. Therefore, I am being a little liberal.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: I entirely agree with the hon. Member. At the next review meeting with the banks I shall include this in the agenda and encourage them to lend more to organic farming. There are other schemes which I have mentioned - the National Horticulture Mission, the National Programme for Organic Production, etc., – which give certain benefits. But I shall ensure that these benefits are extended to organic farmers.

MR. SPEAKER: Q.No.326 - Shri Ramdas Athawale - Not present.

Q.No. 327 – Shri Vijoy Krishna

(Q. No. 327)[KMR11]

श्री विजय कृष्ण : अध्यक्ष महोदय, हमारे लोकतांत्रिक देश ने चुनाव आयोग को महत्वपूर्ण जिम्मेदारी दी है।[s12] मैं सरकार को बताना चाहता हूं कि चुनावों के जो प्रयोग हुए हैं, उसमें अब भी धाँधलियां होती हैं और निÂपक्षता पर सवाल उठते हैं। कई सवाल चुनावों से संबंधित हैं। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या सरकार चुनाव सुधार से संबंधित किसी प्रस्ताव पर विचार कर रही है?

SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ: We have received certain proposals. We are trying to develop consensus in political parties.

12.00 hrs.